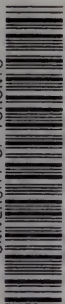


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Frances (Moody)
The maid of Croissey
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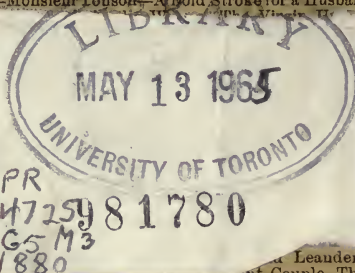
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THE MAID OF CROISSEY;

OR, THERESA'S VOW.

A DRAMA, IN TWO ACTS,—BY MRS. CHARLES GORE.



Dramatis Personæ.

[See page 11.]

First Produced at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, July 20th, 1835.

FRANCIS	...	Mr. Vining.	THERESA	...	Miss. Taylor.
SERJEANT AUSTERLITZ	...	Mr. Webster.	MANETTE	...	Mrs. Humby.
WALTER	...	Mr. Buckstone.			

No. 339, Dicks' Standard Plays.

C O S T U M E .

FRANCIS.—1st dress : A brown great coat, French trousers, gaiters, and cap. 2nd dress : An undress military frock-coat, foraging cap, &c.

SERGEANT AUSTERLITZ.—1st dress : A blue uniform coat, red facings, white trousers, cap, gaiters, and cross belts. 2nd dress : A ragged blue uniform, white trousers, and foraging cap.

WALTER.—1st dress : A green striped jacket, French trousers and jacket, and white hat. 2nd dress : Military stable-dress and cap.

THERESA.—1st dress : A pink and black-striped gown, and French cap. 2nd dress : A blue and white-striped gown.

MANETTE.—1st dress : A blue gown, French apron and cap. 2nd dress : A red gown.

S T A G E D I R E C T I O N S .

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance*; P. S. *Prompt Side*; O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

R.

RC.

C.

LC.

L.

. The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

THE MAID OF CROISSEY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Village Inn, s. e. e. Before the door a large hollow tree, to which is appended the sign "The Oak of Croissey, by Walter Berier." A staircase, t. e. r., leading to the door of a bedchamber—benches, tables, &c.

(Voice of Serjeant Austerlitz heard without.) Hillo, hol! Within, there!—house!

Enter AUSTERLITZ and FRANCIS, L.

Aus. So we have foraged to some purpose!—"The Oak of Croissey"—the best inn in La Brie! (Calls.) House!

Enter MANETTE, R. from Inn.

Man. What are you pleased to want, gentlemen?

Aus. A bottle or two of your best wine, in the first place, transcendent beauty!—in the next, address yourself to my comrade; for though I stand treat, he stands the shot!

Man. (To Francis.) Anything for your service, sir? (Curtseys.)

Fra. What can you give us for luncheon?

Man. Whatever you are pleased to choose; but, unluckily, we have neither beef, veal, nor mutton, in the house.

Aus. Well, well, we are not particular; you have only to twist the neck of one of your fine fat barn-door fowls, and clap it on the gridiron.

Man. Why, as to our fowls, gentlemen, I can't say much for our fowls—our fowls are apt to be tough; but what say you to some fine, fresh, new-laid eggs? If eggs would serve your turn, I could make you out the prettiest bill of fare!—fried eggs, poached eggs, soft eggs, hard eggs—

Aus. Your larder does not seem likely to burst from an overcharge, bright tulip of the Seine! But, haste; we have no leisure to grumble. Give us some old wine, new bread, and toss us up an omelet, and we will make the best of your fare—(Sitting to the table)—leaving you to make the best of your bill?

Man. (Wiping the table.) Immediately, gentlemen.

Aus. (Trying to take her round the waist.) Double quick time, if you please, sweet rose of La Brie! We are sharp set, you see, and beg you will look sharp.

Man. My name is neither Rose nor Tulip, Mr. Serjeant; and I would have you to know that I stand no nonsense.

[Exit pouting, R.]

Fra. Why annoy the poor girl? She seems civil and modest.

Aus. And so am I civil and modest; but gallantry, sir, is one of the first duties of a gallant soldier, and 'twas not for nothing your humble servant was surnamed, in the fifth company of Voltigeurs, "Cupid the Conqueror?"

Fra. (Laughing.) "Cupid the Conqueror!" Ha! ha! ha!

Aus. By the blood of Turenne, sir! mine flows through my veins flaming like so much brandy-punch! In our Egyptian campaign, I was all but swallowed by a crocodile, while swimming in full chase after a dinky Diana of the Nile, and in Italy, 'twas my fate to receive no fewer than six stabs of the stiletto from as many jealous husbands, within six weeks, sir, of the battle of Marengo! In short, 'tis the Emperor's own luck that a spark from my heart never yet blew up one of his powder magazines!

Fra. Ay, ay, Serjeant! all this is suitable enough in your profession; but in mine—(Sighs.)

Aus. Why, who the deuce, then, are you? Bombs and mortars, sir!—when first I set eyes on you this morning, pede-de-destrianizing along the Melun road, says I, to my comrade, Corporal Shrapnell, "Yonder goes as pretty a piece of cannon's meat as ever stood five feet ten in his shoes." An inch less, and I should not have invited you to lunch with me! At the opening of a campaign like the present, you see, every Frenchman looks to me like a soldier, and every soldier like a brother.

Enter MANETTE, with refreshments from inn, R.

Man. Here's your omelet, gentleman! Take care of your mouths, 'tis hissing hot from the pan.

Aus. And the wine, my precious? (Sits down.)

Man. Here, sir!

Aus. Down with it, then, or you'll make it as hot as the omelet.

Man. I'd have you to know, Mr. Serjeant, that 'tis fresh from the cellar; and our cellar is as cool as—(Aside)—as cool as his own impudence!

Aus. (Drinks.) My service to you, young gentleman! (To Francis.) Make her sit down; yonder is a chair most invitingly opening its arms to you, my pretty dear! (Helps the omelet.) A bit of the brown?—

[Exit Manette into inn, R.]

Why did you let her go?

Fra. I have no time for trifling. I am now on my road to the Seminary of Sens, to take orders as

a priest—(Sighs.)—and to the pleasant follies of life I must henceforth become a stranger.

Aus. (Eating.) A priest, at your age?—ha! instead of roosting with the black rooks of the seminaries, march with the eagles of the Emperor. We are now on our route to China, taking Russia and Tartary by the way.

Fra. I had heard that the Emperor was preparing a formidable campaign. And you are about to join the army?

Aus. As soon as I have made up my little parcel of conscripts from the villages hereabouts. Bombs and mortars, sir! already I can fancy myself making a breach in the great wall of China, between a canister shot and a canister of Imperial hyson! (Drinks.) And when we have stormed Pekin, and established the Emperor Prefect of the department of Twankay, by the blood of Turenne, sir, mark my words, but all the beauties of Europe will be marching out in close column to welcome us home, and the duchesses of Paris sending in proposals for the hands of the grenadiers of the Guard. (Twirls his mustachios.) Ha! ha!

Fra. Ah, Serjeant, you are indeed a happy man! while I—

Aus. Choose to devote yourself to the black regiment, to chaunt the word of command in bad Latin for the remainder of your life to an awkward squad of peasants?—bah!

Fra. I have neither parents nor fortune; and such is the decree of the uncle to whom I am indebted for my education.

Aus. Well, well; let us finish the bottle, and think no more on't. (Fills.) Come give us a toast.

Fra. (Rising.) "To the glory and beauty of France!" Till to-morrow, at least, I am free to pledge such a toast. (Drinks.)

Aus. Well said, my hearty! (A drum heard.) Aha! is it so late? Hillo!—ho!

(Rises, and buckles on his knapsack.)

Enter MANETTE from inn.

Man. Pray don't disturb yourselves, gentlemen!—'tis only some mountebank, or perhaps a pedlar from the neighbouring fair announcing cheap goods in the market-place as an excuse for raising his prices!

Aus. No such thing, my little convolvulus of the Seine! Bombs and mortars!—do you think Serjeant Austerlitz could mistake the martial sound of genuine calf-skin? 'Tis a soldier's summons!—I obey. (To Francis.) Young gentleman, farewell. I have given you my advice: had I been your grandmother I should have said the same. (To Manette.) Barbarous beauty!—I have the honour to kiss your hand.

Man. Keep your kisses for those who want them, Mr. Serjeant.

Aus. No, no, my child, I am not quite so general in my devotions (Drum again.) So, 'tis the signal of my corporal—to the right about, face; quick march!—salute!

[Exit, kissing his hand to Manette,
U. E. L.]

Man. (Clearing the table.) An audacious fellow! 'Tis well for him that Walter did not hear him talk of kissing my hand.

Fra. And who is Walter?

Man. Why, Theresa's brother, to be sure.

Fra. And who is Theresa?

Man. Who is Theresa?—ha! ha! ha! Why, where have you been living all your life, not to have heard of Theresa, the fair Maid of Croissey? Scarcely a lad in all the villages round but has asked her hand in marriage; but she will hear of none of them. And ever since the death of her parents, who built this famous inn—the Croissey Oak, she has kept house for her brother. But Walter won't long want a housekeeper—Walter is going to be married!

Fra. (Aside.) Married? They think of nothing but love—nothing but marriage! while I—

(Sighs, and takes out his purse.)

Man. (Aside.) Stupid fellow! The Serjeant would have asked the name of the bride, or guessed at once that it could be no other than myself.

Fra. But we seem to have forgotten the reckoning?

Man. 'Tis soon made out, sir. Cheese, omelet, wine—a dower of three livres.

Fra. Not forgetting a trifle for yourself. (Pays her, she curtsies.) How far do you call it to the bridge of Montereau?

Man. Some people say three leagues, some four. I fancy it is about four on foot and three on horseback.

Fra. And I who have been on the road since day-break, and under a scorching sun—

Man. Suppose you were to rest yourself here a bit, till the heat of the day is over? (Points to the staircase.) We have a nice quiet little room yonder, where nothing will disturb you.

Fra. With all my heart, if I am not in the way.

Man. The door is open. There shall be as little noise as I can help—I will be as still as a mouse.

Fra. Thanks! thanks!

[Exits by the stairs, T. E. R.]

Man. (Looks out.) What can have become of Walter? Nearly three o'clock, and he has been out all day! Sauntering, I dare say, on the high-road, and gapping about at the gay uniforms of the soldiers! Silly fellow! as if he would not have enough of drums and uniforms, if the conscripts of 1812 should ever be called upon for service.

(Sings.)

Enter WALTER, U. E. L.

Wal. Ay, ay, sing away, and welcome—sing away! You will have soon plenty of time for singing, when your poor unfortunate husband, that is to be, is fighting, hug to hug, with the Russian bears, or perhaps spitted, like a lark, on the lance of a Don Cossack.

Man. Fighting? You fighting?—you spitted on a lance? Why, what in the world do you mean, Walter?

Wal. Only that orders have been issued by beat of drum in the village, for the conscripts of 1812 to join the army.

Man. To join the army? You shan't go!—you can't go! Let the Minister of War know that you are going to be married—you can't go!

Wal. I dare say! The Emperor is very much in the habit of consulting the inclinations of his subjects in such particulars. No, Manette, the doom of your poor unfortunate husband, that was to have been, is sealed. (Manette sobs and cries.) But don't cry—cheer up—be a man! Say bravely—

"Here, my dear Walter, take my last embrace, your three shirts, two pocket-handkerchiefs, and a pair of stockings, and away to the field of glory!"

Enter THERESA from inn.

The. Who talks about the field of glory?—and what makes Manette in tears this morning?

Wal. Because I am on the brink of becoming a hero, and she can't bear the thought of it; she grudges me to my king and country.

The. A hero? You?

Man. Yes, my dear Theresa. The conscripts are called out, and, instead of staying at home and listening to reason, Walter is going a-soldiering. *(Cries.)*

The. He knows better. Who have we but himself to take care of us, and attend to the inn?

Man. That's just what I was telling him. And who should I have to marry me? *(Whimpers.)* He can't go!

Wal. Be reasonable. All I ask of you is to be reasonable. The Prefect is already arrived in the village, to pass in review the conscripts of Croissey. Supposing, now, I were to go and swear that I was not an able-bodied man; do you think he'd believe me? Supposing I were to say I was hump-backed; wouldn't he answer, "The better reason, my lad, for keeping your face towards the enemy?" Supposing I was to say I was blind of an eye? wouldn't he answer, "Your aim will be the surer." Supposing I was to say I was lame, and couldn't march; wouldn't he reply, "Then, like a redoubt, you must be carried?" Supposing—

Man. *(B.)* Supposing—supposing! Why should we suppose any such nonsense?

The. *(C.)* Rather say boldly to him, at once—"I am the brother of an unprotected sister, to whom I must supply the place of father—I am betrothed to a good and virtuous girl, of whom I am bound to become the husband—I am master of the best inn in the parish, to which I am bound to do justice, for the benefit of my neighbours."

Wal. Great men, like hungry stomachs, have no ears!—"he would bid me hold my tongue, hold up my head, to the right wheel, and—march!"

Man. And so defraud your sister, your wife, and your customers.

The. Is there no chance, think you, of procuring a substitute? If we were to raise money enough on our inn, surely a man might be found?—

Wal. Poo! men are no longer to be had for money—we are scarce!

Man. They are selling as dear as quartern loaves. The great retired tobaccoist, Monsieur Cigarre, up at the châteaun, paid ten thousand francs for one last week.

Wal. Like enough—he pays for everything through the nose.

The. *(With spirit.)* If I were a man—

Wal. *(L.)* Why, what would you do?

The. Take possession of your regimentals, and be off to the army. The Emperor has had worse soldiers—there is a spark of the right spirit in me—

Wal. Ay, that might chance to set fire to a whole battalion! The fair maid of Croissey met-and-morposed into a light dragoon? No, no, Theresa, you are too pretty to be trusted in the ranks; you have already a regiment of suitors under your command—be satisfied.

The. *(Eagerly.)* Under my command?—not they.

Man. Who knows but you might persuade one of them to go and be killed in Walter's place?—they are always swearing they are ready to die for your sake.

The. A thought strikes me. *(Whispers to Manette.)* They are now assembled in the marketplace to look at the soldiers; bid them come hither. Tell them I have a secret to communicate.

Man. A secret!—what secret?

The. That they must learn from myself. Go!

[Exit Manette, U. E. L.]

Wal. You had better both set your needles together to get ready my kit for starting.

The. Not yet. Look at me from head to foot, brother Walter, and tell me what you think of me?

(Stands in position.)

Wal. That you're a fine mettlesome lass, as like me as two French beans, and almost as pretty as Manette.

The. Don't you think Theresa Berier is paj enough for the best substitute going?

Wal. But who is there to be had, for love or money?

The. There's Louis Girard, son to the grocer in the market-place—

Wal. Who knocked out his own front teeth, that he might have the excuse of not being able to tear a cartridge!

The. There's Peter Mulot, the miller's nephew—

Wal. Whose uncle is expecting to be made a legislative body. Do you think such a kid-leather chap as he would go for a conscript?—bah!

The. Well, well, we shall see; 'tis worth the trial.

Re-enter MANETTE, with a crowd of young Villagers, U. E. L.]

Vil. What do you want with us, Ma'mselle Theresa?

2nd Vil. See how readily we obey your call; what do you want—what do you wish?

The. To make my choice among you of a husband.

(Commotion among the young men.)

Wal. Plainly spoken—fairly spoken, upon my word!—what next?

The. I need not remind you how long and how often you have all entreated me to make up my mind to marriage, and promised to submit to my decision.

Villagers. We have! we have!

The. My mind is made up.

Villagers. Well?—well?

The. *(Takes the gold cross from her neck.)* You see this cross—this cross of gold! It contains a lock of the grey hairs of my parents—to me as sacred as a relique!

(She walks through the crowd, and hangs it upon a twig of the oak.)

Villagers. *(Murmuring among themselves.)* What can she mean?

The. *(Advancing to the front.)* Let him among you, therefore, who would win the hand and affections of the Maid of Croissey—*(The door of the chamber above is seen to open.)*—give proof of his

courage and devotion by filling the place of my brother Walter in the opening campaign. And if, before the expiration of two years, he brings me back yonder cross, as the pledge of our engagement, let him be poor, miserable, or disfigured, he, and none other, shall become the husband of Theresa! (*Villagers grumble among themselves.*) You cannot doubt my word—my character is known among you: from my youth upwards no one ever accused Theresa of uttering an untruth.

Villagers. No one—no one!

1st *Vil.* Ma'mselle Theresa's word is better than the oath of another. But yet—

2nd *Vil.* As the grand army is going an expedition into a heathen country—

3rd *Vil.* And as we all desire to live for your sake—

Man. The sneaks! I guessed as much.

4th *Vil.* The bargain don't particularly suit us. Soldiering is not so good a trade as it used to be.

Wal. There's the white feather for you! Not a man of spirit in the whole tribe!

(*Villagers gradually retire.*)

The. Not one advances—not one—not one!

(*Hides her face.*)

Man. (*Whimpering.*) I knew how it would be—Walter must go; and if he is killed I shall be a widow, without so much as a pension to comfort me in my misfortune.

[*Exit Villagers, U. E. L.*]

The. So much for the truth of their attachment! My dear, dear brother, such happy years as we have spent together!—must we—must we part at last!

(*Throws herself into Walter's arms, and while they form a group in front, Francis descends the stairs, snatches the cross from the tree, and exit U. E. L.*)

Wal. I told you 'twas lost time counting on such a set of pitiful varlets.

Man. To see them circling off, like a flight of pigeons at the sound of a pop-gun!

The. Let them again pretend to my hand, if it be only as a partner at our next dance on the green—

Man. Or mine!

Wal. But you won't either of you think of dancing while I am at the wars?

Man. (*Cries.*) Oh! oh!

The. Let them take you at their peril, Walter. I am capable of any thing, of every thing! Rather than see you a conscript—

Wal. Of what use to make ourselves a laughing stock to the authorities? I shall be tied to the tail of a gen'd'arme's horse, and carried off like a *malinfactor*.

Man. (*Whimpering.*) Like a *malinfactor*!

Wal. I only wait for the command, and who knows but I may return with the Cross of the Legion of Honour, or of Malta, or Nap himself knows what! (*Struts.*) I feel that there is the making of a great man in me!

Man. Listen, listen to him, Theresa! You see 'tis a real pleasure to the ungrateful fellow to go and be killed. If I keep single for his sake, may I—

The. Brother, brother! consider your promises to my dying parents.

Wal. (*Crying.*) I see you are both determined to break my heart.

Enter SERJEANT AUSTERLITZ, U. E. L.

Aus. I have a little word to say to the conscript Walter Bericr.

Wal. Mr. Serjeant, I rather think you mean me?

The. (*Aside.*) So soon!

Aus. (*Presenting a paper.*) Can you read, my lad?

Wal. Mr. Serjeant, I rather think not.

Aus. Here are a few lines upon business which admits of no delay.

Man. (*Snatching the paper.*) He shan't read a word of it, whether he can or no.

Aus. Have a care what you are about, sweet daffodil of Croissey, or you may chance to repent your *precip-cip-cipitation*.

The. (*Taking the paper from Manette.*) What do I see?—a discharge!

Aus. Ay, poor fellow, 'tis all over with him; he is discharged from the service.

Wal. (*Taking courage.*) I don't choose to be discharged; people will fancy I am maimed, or halt, or blind. I will serve; I will—

Man. (*Crossing to him, and putting her hand on his mouth.*) Hold your tongue, blockhead.

Aus. Why it is a sort of pity the young fellow should have found a substitute. A little gun-powder and pomatum would have made his whiskers grow.

Wal. La!

The. A substitute?

Aus. Ay, young lady; and if I have the honour of addressing Ma'mselle Theresa, the fair maid of Croissey, thanks to your own bright eyes, which look as large, and as shining as those on the surface of our barrack broth.

Wal. After all, then, 'tis one of the lads of Croissey who has devoted himself for the sake of my sister?

Aus. On the contrary, 'tis a stranger who has deputed me to acquaint her that he has become a crusader at her bidding; in other words, that he is in possession of her cross of gold, and accepts the pledge as her affianced husband.

The. A stranger in possession of my cross?—a stranger engaged to become my husband?

Wal. I won't hear of such a thing—rather march to my duty, at the peril of a thousand lives!

(*Crosses to c.*)

Aus. Bombs and mortars! What can you desire better for her, than to become the bride of a gallant soldier?

Wal. A man of whom we know nothing; who seems ashamed to show his face!

Aus. By the blood of Turenne, he has no cause; 'tis as honest and as comely a one as ever grew on thy shoulders.

Wal. That may be, but he shall not have my sister on such terms.

The. (*Gravely—crosses to c.*) And if it be my pleasure to accept him? He has devoted himself nobly and disinterestedly for my sake; I will not retract the pledge I freely offered.

Aus. Spoken like a girl of spirit!

The. Already I feel an interest in his favour. Relying on Theresa's word, without making a

parade of his generosity, he is willing to abandon all—home, friends, country—on the impulse of a warm and generous nature. Such is the man I have chosen for myself. Such is the man who has chosen me; and I am not ungrateful.

Man. (To *Austerlitz*.) He is not very old, I hope, Mr. Serjeant, or lame, or—

Aus. Set your little heart at rest, sweet honey-suckle of the Oak of Croissey! We are not apt to accept recruits for the emperor's grand army whose physical externals are not of satisfactory aspect. The lad is very little inferior in appearance to myself.

The. He has judged wisely in departing without an interview. I might have learned to regret him.

Aus. My life on't you would!

The. (To *Austerlitz*.) Tell him that, with her whole heart, Theresa thanks him. That for two whole years she will remain single for his sake; and when he brings me back my cross and claims my hand, become his true and faithful wife!

Aus. He shall hear it, word for word!

(Clock strikes three.)

The. Hark! This hour will I daily devote a prayer for his safety! At this hour bid him remember Theresa!

Wal. No thanks to him for having prevented me from becoming a great general.

Man. You forget that you are now at liberty to become a family man!

(Drums.)

Aus. So!—the roll-call! We are off.

The. And I, so deeply in his debt, may perhaps never even behold my benefactor.

Aus. Our route winds round the foot of yonder hill. By the blood of Turenne! I have it not in my heart to disappoint you. So keep a sharp look out, and I will take care he marches fourth in the line. (Drums.) Farewell!—*Au revoir!*—Lovely maidens of Croissey, your slave!

[Military salute, and exit, U. E. L.]

(Military music faintly heard at a distance.)

Man. They are coming!

Wal. Lord, lord! I can hardly prevent my feet from keeping time to the music! I have half a mind to be after them!

Man. Hush! Yonder is Serjeant Austerlitz at the head of the line.

The. And the fourth—

(Agitated.)

Man. 'Tis a stranger.

Wal. He turns away his head.

The. (Looking out.) He waves the cross!—'Tis my affianced husband! I cannot distinguish his features.—Away with those tears!

Man. (Supports her.) Theresa!

The. (Extending her arms wildly towards the line of march.) Farewell! Heaven guard you in the hour of danger! Farewell!—farewell!

(Military music, shout, and group.)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

An interval of two years is supposed to elapse between the Acts.

SCENE I.—A neat inn yard. On a bench near the door of the inn, S. E. R., WALTER, in a military cap and stable dress, sits smoking; MANETTE at her spinning-wheel.

Man. A fine thing, indeed, to pass one's life with a man who answers all one's questions with a puff of his pipe! I would as soon be married to a steam-engine!

Wal. I shall never get used to tobacco, if you always interrupt me in this way; I have been nearly choked twice this morning already.

Man. And why should you get used to it?

Wal. Bah! Nothing gives a young fellow the air of an old soldier, so much as having a pipe in his mouth!

Man. (Rising and coming forward.) An old soldier, indeed! That campaign of ten days and a half is always running in your head.

Wal. Fourteen days, if you please, counting Sundays!

Man. And a fine feat it was, for a man to run the chance of making his wife a widow, by setting himself up against a whole army of Prussians and Russians, and other heathen Hottentots!

Wal. (Comes forward.) Why didn't the whole village of Croissey cry shame on me, for letting a stranger go substitute for me to Moscow two years ago? And what was I to do, pray, when the Cossacks came galloping into France at the tail of our army, and took possession of highways and bye-ways, and ordered a *levée en masse* against the enemy.

Man. Why, stay at home, to be sure, and take care of your inn—and your farm—and your wife—and your sister!

Wal. No, Manette Beriér, no! The heart was glowing within me with martial ardour. I became a *levée en masse*! I did the duty of a patriot, and a non-commissioned officer!

Man. And what was the consequence? Didn't the Mynheers and Don Cossacks come and besiege your farm during your absence? Weren't we woken out of our sleep by the distant "boom!" of the cannon; and before daylight, weren't the muskets "bang, banging" away in our very barn-yards—with the fowls screaming, the geese cackling, and the grenadiers and troopers swearing like mad? A pretty time for a poor lone woman's husband to be a *levée en masse*, indeed! The Lord knows what might have happened to us, if Providence hadn't sent to our relief the brave captain, who has never since quitted Croissey!

Wal. It wasn't Providence sent him—'twas the general of division!

Man. Whatever sent or brought him, I know that he and his company hadn't been five minutes in the village, before the vile marauders who were plundering it lay stacked as close and still as so many sheaves of wheat! Well, thank heaven, 'twas the last of our frights and troubles! The next day, we learnt that Bonaparte was on his road to the Isle of Elba!

Wal. And I, on my road home. Thanks to the captain, that I still had a home to come to.

Man. He seems almost to fancy it a home of his own. 'Tis now four months since peace was pro-

claimed; his wounds are healed, yet he does not talk of leaving us.

Wal. Why should he? He has resigned his commission, not choosing to serve under the new people.

Man. And yet I should have fancied a gentleman like him would have preferred living in some gay city, such as—

Wal. And haven't you *nous*, then, to discover what detains him among us? Don't you see with half an eye that he is over head and ears in love with my sister?

Man. With Theresa?—Bah!—He might just as well fall in love with the image of St. Bridget that stands yonder on the bridge! Theresa looks upon herself as betrothed.

Wal. I don't know what she looks upon *herself*, but I know she looks at the *captain* very much as I used to look at *you*, Manette, when we was a courting!

Man. Then why don't they make up a match, Watty, like you and I?

Wal. That's exactly what I want to make out. 'Twould be the making of Theresa, and I mean to take the business into my own hands. She can't deny that she's fanatamized with him; and so—

Man. Hush! she is here!

Enter THERESA from inn, s. e. r.

The. Well, brother—well sister, what are you about? Are we not to dine to-day?

Wal. Why, it is but common civility to wait for the captain.

Man. When he set off yesterday for Melun, he said he would be back by dinner-time.

The. But you will have him here immediately: I espied him just now, from my window, coming down the hill.

Wal. (*Aside.*) Oh! I suppose she wasn't on the watch—not she.

Man. (*Going to the gate.*) Coming down the hill? (*Looks out.*) Lord! I see nothing but a hay-cart!

Wal. (*Looking out.*) And a man leaning on a cane! It can't be the captain; unless he should have happened to cut a bamboo as he came through the forest.

The. Nevertheless, I certainly saw the captain!

Enter FRANCIS, r., in a half-dress uniform.

Fra. And here I am, my good friends! I missed the coach, and came by the lower road. Have I kept you waiting?

Wal. Not a minute, captain, not a second! To the kitchen, wife—to the kitchen! Troop—march! I give you five minutes, military time, to make ready and present!

Man. Come and lend me a hand then, or I may miss the fire!

Wal. Double the step, and away with you!

[*Eseunt into inn, r.*

The. (*About to follow.*) And I will go and prepare the table. You must be hungry with your walk.

Fra. Why in such haste to quit me, Theresa?

The. Only that you may be the more quickly served.

Fra. (*Taking her hand.*) Let me wait; I am in no hurry when you remain with me!

The. (*Withdrawing her hand.*) Sit down, then; I am sure you are tired.

Fra. (*Seated, and showing a place beside him.*) But why so far? Won't you accept a place by my side?

The. I am not fatigued, just now

Fra. (*Rising.*) Nor I, then.

The. (*Eagerly.*) Stay, stay where you are. Three leagues on foot, and not tired?

(*She sits.*)

Fra. I feel no fatigue while you are near me, Theresa; I feel—I feel—

The. Did you happen to see a newspaper when you were at Melun?

Fra. I rarely look at a paper. Politics have no longer an interest for me.

The. But you might wish to learn tidings of the fate of your brother soldiers who are still detained by wounds, or sickness, or imprisonment, on their route from Russia?

Fra. By brave brother soldiers!

The. Has the remnants of the army yet passed the frontier?

Fra. The greater number of them, Theresa, will return no more; 'tis only here and there a doating mother who patiently awaits their coming.

The. (*Aside, gravely.*) And I!

Fra. For my part, I loathe very name of Russia! 'Twas there I lost a dear and trusty friend!—'twas there, that sinking under my wounds, I lost all hope of returning to my native country.

The. What a joy for your family to behold you once again!

Fra. I have no longer a family; I am alone in the world! But such will not always be my fate. I hope, ere long, to surround myself with the dearest and tenderest ties! During the four months we have lived together, dearest, loveliest Theresa—(*Takes her hand.*)—your merits—your charms—

The. (*Rising suddenly.*) Here is dinner, sir; here is my brother!

Fra. Psha! Always, always interrupted!

Enter WALTER, MANETTE, from inn, r., and two farming lads, bringing in a table ready covered.

Wal. You thought us long, I dare say?

Man. I flatter myself the captain will have something to say to his dinner to-day! To table, to table!

(*They sit down.*)

Wal. Fill the captain's glass, wife. He seems overcome with fatigue.

Man. And pass the black pudding; I boiled a yard and a half. I was sure we should all be hungry.

Wal. Fill his glass, I say, Theresa! Hollo! what makes your hand shake so? You have spilled half;—did you fancy the table-cloth was thirsty? (*Aside to Manette.*) Wife, do but watch how sheepishly they sit looking at each other.

Man. (*Aside to Walter.*) I see, I see! Stupid! You shouldn't seem to be watching them!

Wal. I hope, captain, your business went off smooth at Melun.

Fra. Better than I expected, my good friend. The notary who required an interview, had it in charge to acquaint me that an uncle, whom I formerly offended by my disobedience, has left me sole heir to his fortune!

Wal. What a pleasant way of revenging himself! Wife, have you affronted any of your uncles?

Man. Unluckily, all my uncles are aunts.

Wal. We must look out for a chateau for him in the neighbourhood.

Fra. No chateau! A good substantial farmhouse for me!

Wal. And a wife—you'll want a good substantial wife, too, to take care of it. Who knows, now you are a man of fortune, but you might marry the prefect's daughter?

The. The prefect has only sons.

Wal. Bah!—I meant the daughter of the mayor!

The. She is scarcely seven years old.

Wal. (Aside to Theresa.) Can't you hold your tongue goose-cap? Don't you see that I am sounding him? (*Aloud.*) Then there is the great meal-merchant, Corbell, who has half a dozen daughters—as white and plump!—pretty little rowly-powly souls!

Fra. You need not give yourself so much trouble to find me a wife. My choice is made; and if I am so happy as to obtain Theresa's consent—

The. Sir! Mr. Francis!

Wal. Captain, you do us too much honour! Sister Theresa, I hope you are satisfied. 'Tis to some purpose you were called the fair maid of Croissey—to have secured a young, rich, handsome husband; and one who has been in the wars, too, like myself! Why, the whole family of the Beriérs are becoming military men!

Fra. Let your sister speak for herself, Walter. One word of assent from Theresa's lips, is essential to my happiness.

Wal. Bah! bah! As head of the house, I answer for her, at once! Theresa thanks you kindly; and here's to the health of the bride and bridegroom. Wife, stand up, and drink the captain's health! (*Drinks.*) So get a new coat made, in a jiffy; for this day week, at the latest, we will celebrate the wedding!

The. You are mistaken, Walter.

Wal. I tell you we can't have it a day sooner—'tis impossible!

The. I am grateful for the captain's affection—his disinterested affection; but I cannot become his wife!

Wal. and Man. } Not become his wife?

The. Never! (*All rise.*)

Fra. And I, who fancied this day was to be the happiest of my life!

Wal. Sister Theresa, you will repent this fit of the whimsies. 'Tis a mere woman's caprice.

The. No, brother! I am fulfilling a duty—a painful duty.

Man. (Aside to Francis.) Leave her to her brother to talk her over. He will get at the truth of the business.

[*Exeunt Manette and Francis into inn, R.*]

Wal. You don't mean to tell me that you have any personal objection to the captain?

The. On the contrary; I am fully sensible of our obligations towards him.

Wal. Sensible of a fiddlestick! Excuse my making use of a musical expression! You know you love him dearly!

The. Well then, I do love him! Are you satisfied? But 'tis out of my power to become his wife.

Wal. And why, pray?—why?

The. Because I am betrothed to another!

Wal. To another?

The. Have you forgotten the generous friend who

became your substitute, who served for you in that fatal campaign?

Wal. Bah!—a stranger;—a fellow you never saw—who was ashamed to show his face. A pretty face it must have been, which he had not courage to show!

The. He had courage, at least, to confront the enemy for my sake!

Wal. And the enemy, no doubt, settled his pretensions, or we should have heard more of him, by this time. Depend on it he is dead and buried; or, at least, a prisoner.

The. Is that a reason for forgetting him? I am not so ungrateful! (*Clock strikes three.*) At this hour, every day since he quitted the village, have I offered up a prayer for his sake!

Wal. Pray as much as you please; but if he is as dead as Marlbrook, what use will it be to wait for him?

The. What proof have we that fatigue, wants, wounds—wounds suffered in our behalf—may not have detained him on his route? And supposing he were to return at last, poor, maimed, and miserable, and say, "Here is your cross, Theresa! How have you kept faith with me?"

Wal. Why, you might very easily answer, "That he should not have stayed so long; that you promised to keep single two years, and that the term expired last harvest."

The. No, brother! I would answer, "Give me back my cross, and accept my hand!" I might break my heart—I would not break my vow!

FRANCIS having overheard her last words, rushes in from inn, R.

Fra. What do I hear!—Walter!—Theresa, dear Theresa!

Wal. What's in the wind now?

Fra. I am the happiest of mankind!

The. Alas!—what mean you?

Fra. That the words you have just pronounced, remove all my misgivings. Two years ago, in traversing La Brie to embrace a profession hateful to my feelings, I paused to refresh myself at this very village—this very inn!—when accident rendered me the eye-witness of a scene which changed the whole current of my destinies. A young girl—they called her in the place "the fair maid of Croissey"—

The. Proceed—proceed!

Fra. Generously offered herself a sacrifice to secure the safety of an only brother!

The. Francis!

Fra. "Let him who would win Theresa's hand and heart," she said, "become a substitute for Walter Berier; and if within two years he bring me back this cross, I pledge myself to become his wife!"—Two long, two weary years, Theresa, did I serve for your sake!

Wal. How, captain! you?—A hero like yourself, my substitute?

The. Generous, noble-minded friend! A thousand and a thousand times my hand and heart are your own! (*They embrace.*)

Wal. And in a week's time we shall have the wedding, after all!

Enter MANETTE from inn, R.

Wife, wife! I always told you my substitute had taken after me! I always told you he had turned out a hero! 'Twas Captain Francis, his very self!

Man. (L.) The captain? I'm glad of it, with all my heart. But why not from the first, produce Theresa's cross?

Wal. Ay! why didn't you at once produce the cross?

The. True, dear Francis! Why do you not restore me my cross? In the joy of the discovery, I had forgotten it.

Wal. Now it has been to the wars, I feel quite curious to see it again.

Fra. I fear you will be disappointed, for unluckily, 'tis no longer in my possession.

The. No longer in your possession?

Fra. Amid the hazards of war, how little chance had I of preserving it.

The. I see how it is!—To delude me into becoming your wife, Manette acquainted you with my fatal vow!

Fra. Theresa, do you then doubt my word?

The. (Agitated.) I dare not believe you! These are mere pretexts to shake my resolution; another may produce my cross, and upbraid me with my broken vow!

Fra. Had you ever loved me, such scruples would not perplex your mind.

The. In seeking to serve your cause, my brother has placed an eternal obstacle between us.

(Crosses to R.)

Wal. Don't throw the blame on me! You yourself must have related the story to the captain; and he very naturally, as any other man in love would do, hit upon a stratagem to—

Fra. (Indignantly.) Nay, then, since all here unite to misdoubt my word and defame my honour, 'tis time I should be gone! Another hour, and I quit Croissey for ever!

[Exit hastily, T. E. R.]

The. Walter! Walter! you may have meant me well: but this unworthy plot has for ever destroyed the peace of Theresa.

(Going.)

Wal. Are you both in league to drive me out of my senses? or are you stark staring mad yourselves? (Following her towards the house.) Theresa! my dear little sister—my pretty little sister! If you would but listen to reason—

The. Leave me, Walter!

Wal. You will repent when 'tis too late!—you—

[Exit, talking, into inn, R.]

Man. And so ends our prospect of a wedding in the family! Did ever living mortal hear such nonsense! If she was so fond of the captain, why not make believe to believe him; and take her chance of the other's ever coming back? I'll lay my life, he is deep enough under the snow, poor fellow!—and if he should ever make his appearance, it will be in the dead of a winter's night—when the lamp burns blue, or there's a winding-sheet in the candle!—But who have we here?

Enter SERJEANT AUSTERLITZ, U. E. L., in a faded uniform, leaning on his stick—comes down L.

Aus. Surely they have conjured away the inn? No! 'tis the old house "The Croissey Oak," tricked up in a new uniform, and fighting under strange colours!

Man. Do you want anything, my good man?

Aus. Yes; I want, or rather I don't want, to be

called "my good man!" It sounds like an insult in the ears of a veteran!

Man. Well, then, can I serve you with anything, my brave friend?

Aus. Now you speak to the purpose; so give me a thimbleful or two of the right thing, and a morsel; and in case my tatters should alarm you for the reckoning—

(Takes out his purse.)

Man. No, no!—we know better than to be hard upon an old soldier!

[Exit into inn, R.]

Aus. (Sitting down.) As well as I remember, that must be the other one. (Takes off his wallet, and lays down his stick.) 'Tis no bad thing to rest, after a walk of five thousand miles—particularly when one feels one's journey is spun to an end. Augh! 'tis a long hank of road that's drawn out 'twixt this and Wilna. (Faintly.) One finds it out in coming back. I say nothing of the route for ards—drums beating, colours flying, snacking in this palace and supping in t'other convent, one could put up with a tap or two by the way, and say nothing! But driven home again, with one's ears down like a beaten dog—betrayed by the Austrian father-in-law, and a heap of shabby kings and Judas princes! Bombs and mortars! 'twas hard to bear! Well, well; here I am in France again, where once they used to run to the windows to stare at a corporal of the old gnard! Let them look! Few of us will be seen again!

Enter MANETTE from inn, with wine, bread and cheese.

Man. Here is your lunch, my good man!

Aus. Good woman! you are hard of hearing, or of heart! I told you before that—

Man. I forgot.—Forgive me!—Drink my health, and I will not call you so again. (Fills a glass.)

Aus. I accept your apology. (Comes forward and whispers mysteriously to Manette.) You have no—here?

Man. Spies?—We?—No; we are of the right sort!

Aus. To his health then—and to the memory of those I left behind under the snows of Russia! (Drinks.)

Man. Ah! you have witnessed many a sad day's work.

Aus. And many a glorious one. When one has been conversing through a cannon's mouth, for fifteen years, with all the sovereigns in Europe! By the blood of Turenne! methinks I hear them now! But 'tis all over; all over.

Man. All over.—Thank heaven!

Aus. Unless my brains are wool-gathering, child, your name is Rose—or Celestine—or Clare—or Manette—eh?

Man. What?—you actually know my name?

Aus. And you had once a sister—or sister-in-law—or some such accoutrement—known by the name of the fair maid of Croissey, eh?

Man. Why how in the name of wonder should you know that?

Aus. I have marched this route in better times. And is she still living, the aforesaid?

Man. Theresa? Living and well.

Aus. And single?

Man. Single.

Aus. Be so good as to inform her, then, my little woman, that one of the old ones of the old one wishes to have a few sentences of dialogue with her.

Man. You want to speak with Theresa?

Aus. As soon as may be.

Man. Don't put yourself out of the way. I am in all her secrets; and you can send your message by me.

Aus. Thank ye; but as the business concerns only herself and myself—

Man. (Anxiously.) Concerns only you two?

Aus. Us two!

Man. (More anxiously, aside.) Goodness, gracious!—if it should happen to be— But no; 'tis impossible. (Going slowly, stops short.) But if I were to tell her your name?—

Aus. She would be none the wiser. She never heard it in her life; but you may tell her, if you choose, that the young fellow who used to be called, in the fifth company of Voltigeurs, "Cupid the Conquerer!" wishes to speak with her.

Man. (Hiding a laugh.) I'll go and fetch her to you, Mr. Cupid the Conquerer!

[Exit.

Aus. (Fills a glass.) Another glass; 'twill clear my voice, and inspire me with eloquence. Courage, Serjeant Ansterlitz!—you are about to find yourself face to face with youth and beauty—make the most of your natural advantages!

(Takes off the handkerchief that binds his head, wipes his shoes, and brushes his coat.)

By the blood of Turenne! I have something of the feel of old times coming upon me. (Stands in a military position, and hums—

"My native land, my father's land, for thee how sweet to die!"

Enter THERESA from inn, &c.

The. (To herself.) Manette must be mistaken; I know no such person.

Aus. I crave your pardon, fair maid of Croissey.

The. (Alarmed.) Ha!—a stranger—a soldier!

Aus. You seem afraid of me? Permit an old soldier to assure you that on him your presence produces a more agreeable effect. (Aside.) Bombs and mortars!—she is prettier than ever! (To Theresa.) Don't tremble so, lovely Theresa! Look me in the face. A cat may look at a king!

The. I am so little used to strangers.

Aus. To strangers? You don't remember me, then? Ah, I see how it is—when one's coat has gone down in the world—but don't be afraid.

The. Why should I? Manette just told me you were—

Aus. Yes, yes; she calls me "good man!" Poor child, she knows no better! And so you don't recollect me?—you don't recollect a certain little affair between us?

The. Did we ever meet before?

Aus. Not three years since; but, truth to say, I was a little better brushed up in those days.

The. And you visited Croissey—

Aus. On the very day that drums were beating in the village to muster the conscripts of 1812; and among them was one Walter Berier!

The. What do I hear?

Aus. Since then, I have traversed strange countries, and looked on many a fair face—German—Polish—Russian—but none so taking as your own. I could never drive it from my mind, nor your voice from my heart. Such a sweet little voice as it was, when I heard it first!

The. (Aside.) I tremble!

Aus. "He," (said you) "who will become my brother's substitute, and in two years' time bring me back my cross of gold; this cross, which contains the gray hair of my parents—"

The. My very words!

Aus. "He shall become my husband!" 'Twas a noble sacrifice!

The. It was, indeed, a sacrifice! (Sighs.)

Aus. I am aware that had you held to the letter of your vow, I might have found you married to another; because the two years are more than over. But if I did not bring you back your little trinket sooner, you must blame those beggarly Russians for the delay. The ruffians had favoured me with the thrust of a lance, besides half a dozen balls! Bombs and mortars! I was pierced through and through, till I showed daylight! And then, six months in an hospital, and a doctor to mangle my wounds, with a face like a Tartar, and a beard half an ell long! So, you see, the army was forced to leave me behind, and I had no hand in the last act of the play. Things might have gone differently had I been there! However, as soon as I got breath to blow my fingers, I made my way through twelve feet of snow and thirty degrees of cold, and here I am!

The. And, amid all these trials, you have still managed to preserve—

Aus. The cross? They should have cut my heart out, ere I resigned it! Death and the devil!

The. Hush! hush!

Aus. Forgive me; 'twas you made me swear. (Produces the cross.) Here it is again. I warrant me you have not forgotten it.

The. Miserable that I am! (Staggering.)

Aus. Bombs and mortars! she's going to faint. Take a glass of wine?

The. No, no; 'tis nothing.

Aus. (Aside.) I have scarcely courage to come out with the rest of my story. (Aloud.) And now, Ma'mselle Theresa, allow me—

The. (Mildly.) I know all you would urge; I know, too, that I might reply by reminding you that the two years are more than expired—that I am released from my vow! Others might plead thus; but not Theresa. No; I have never ceased to say to myself—"He does not return; but is he not exposing his life for my sake? Who knows but he may be a prisoner—wounded—infirm?" 'Twas this that kept me faithful to my promise—'twas this that—now you are come at last—determines me to offer you my hand!

Aus. Your hand?—Yours? Why what the dence would you have me do with it?

The. Since you have brought me back my cross. Aus. Brought it you back? Bombs and mortars! but 'twas not I who carried it away.

The. (Eagerly.) Who then, who?

Aus. The finest young fellow that ever drew a sword. Death and—; but I beg your pardon—I forgot myself again.

The. (Overjoyed.) Swear now, as much as you will, only explain yourself.

Aus. Ah! my pretty maid of Croissey—you little know what troubles are in store for you!

The. For me?

Aus. You never saw the gallant soldier who devoted himself to your cause; you know not what you have lost. Brave, generous, handsome—the very moral of a rising soldier—cut out for glory and sentiment! From a private he rose to the honours of the epaulette, before we even reached Moscow; for he was of the stuff that heroes are made. And then so fond of you—so true to you! He was always talking to me of his Theresa!

The. To you?

Aus. Don't you remember me, now? The serjeant who brought you your brother's discharge?

The. To be sure I do. Of what could I be thinking?

Aus. Of him, perhaps; but 'tis all in vain. All luck is over in this world for the cause of the brave! At Smolensko, a ball reached his heart! Look! you may still discern a dent upon the cross!

The. He was wounded, then?

Aus. Mortally. (A pause.) I was already hit myself; but I had strength to hang over him, as he lay stretched upon the sand!—"Serjeant," said he, with his faint faltering voice, (methinks I hear it now) "when you return to our beloved country, carry this cross to Theresa. Bid her wait for me no more!—Bid her be happy—happy with another; but let her sometimes think of him who died for her sake!" (A pause.) At that moment, "boom!" a ball struck me senseless by his side! and when I woke again, 'twas in an hospital.

The. And he?

Aus. Awoke no more! Yes—dogs of Russians—blackguards of Cossacks—you owe me something still for my brave captain; and if I don't manage to make you pay me with at least a field marshal, may I never again handle a halberd!

(Crosses to R.)

The. And what am not I indebted to his memory? Eternal fidelity!—Serjeant, you must never leave us: you must talk to me of him daily, hourly. This is the best inn in La Brie, and here shall you set up your rest.

Aus. In La Brie? I wish it had been in Burgundy.

The. A room shall be devoted to your use, even now. You need repose. Here, John! (Enter a Farming Man.) Carry yonder baggage to the chamber next my brother's. (He takes the bundle.) Go! follow him, Serjeant; and give your own orders.

[Exit Austerlitz and John into inn, R.]

The. And my gallant champion is no more; and Francis has stooped to deceive me! Henceforward, I banish him from my affections! (Looking at the cross.) And thou, little token, little pledge of my widowhood, shalt become my preservative! Thou shalt remind me of the nobleness of him I have lost, and in moments of weakness, recall me to myself.

(Hangs the ribbon round her neck, and hides the cross in her bosom.)

Enter MANETTE, WALTER and FRANCIS, disputing eagerly, T. R. R.

Man. Stay you must and shall—you can't go!

Wal. You sha'n't go: Sooner than lose you, I'll have you taken up by the gend'armes. Speak to him, Theresa. Here's the captain's already packed up, and on the point of quitting us!

The. He judges wisely.

Wal. Your cursed obstinacy has driven him from Croissey?

Man. He who saved us from the attack of the marauding Prussians!

The. (L.) That service I shall never forget; but other things must be remembered. And deeply has he wronged the woman who loved him—who, for his sake, had perhaps been moved in time to renounce her vow, by attempting to win her hand by a mean subterfuge!

Fra. For the last time, Theresa, I protest to you—

The. Silence! He who served so bravely in my brother's place exists no longer. I am a widow.

Wal. (L.) A widow bewitched, I fancy!

Fra. Theresa, I now bid you adieu for ever! But if there be truth in heaven, 'twas I, and I alone, who possessed your cross; and should it ever return into your hands, know that—

The. Disgrace yourself no further; it is here!

(Shows the cross.)

Fra. How?

All. Theresa's cross!

Wal. Yes; 'tis the very same!—a little hump-backed or so; but the goldsmith's mark is still visible.

Fra. (Eagerly.) From whom did you receive it? Speak!

The. From a brave and honourable man.

Fra. Say rather from a vile impostor, whom I will unmask and bring to justice!

The. So long as he remains under our roof you shall not injure him.

Fra. How? He is still here? Nay, then—

(About to enter the house.)

Wal. Be patient, captain, be patient!

Fra. Patient under so gross an injury? No! his blood shall answer for it!

Enter AUSTERLITZ from the inn, R.

Aus. What means this skirmishing? (Sees Francis.) Ha!

Fra. Austerlitz!

Aus. My captain?—alive?—my own brave captain!

(Seizes Francis by the coat and kisses it.)

Fra. (Embracing him.) Your friend!

Aus. Francis!—my dear Francis!—alive—in safety? I am satisfied—I am content—I am happy! (Half crying.) Give me your hand again!—I can't believe all this is real!

Fra. I, too, believed you lost to me for ever.

Wal. And the captain was my substitute, after all. I knew I had had a narrow escape of becoming a great man!

Man. Another time, Theresa, you'll believe us! (Mimics.) "My cross—let him produce my cross!"

Wal. (Mimics.) "I am a widow!"—eh, sister?

Fra. Theresa!

The. (Giving him her hand.) You, at least, will pardon the excess of my fidelity. You must not blame me for being too true to my vow.

Fra. Henceforward, Theresa's cross shall be my cross of honour!

Man. And we shall have a wedding, after all. (To Austerlitz, who stands close to Francis, E.) Well, my good man, are you satisfied?

Aus. Ay, my good woman—so satisfied—so happy

—that, by the blood of Turenne, if all here are as in good a humour as myself, we shall pass the remainder of the day in joy and mirth, with first a hearty cheer in honour of "Theresa's Vow."

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